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11 June 1951

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: The Board's Reaction to US Efforts to Bring  
About the Inclusion of Spain, Greece, and  
Turkey in NATO

1. At the Board meeting last Wednesday morning I was taken aback to hear reference to a surprising initiative of the Department of State in seeking to bring about the inclusion of Spain, Greece, and Turkey in NATO. That was no sudden aberration on the part of State. It was dutiful implementation of formally established US policies set forth in NSC 72/4 (approved 1 February 1951) and NSC 109 (approved 24 May 1951). The adoption of those policies was preceded by a struggle between State and Defense over a period of months. The relevant NSC papers have been available in ONE and their accession advertized. The Staff, I know, was fully aware of developments. It actually circulated an earlier memorandum of information on Spain (No. 35, 14 March 1951) as well as the recent one on Greece and Turkey (No. 75, 28 May 1951). I am astonished that the Board was surprised.

2. Implicit in that surprise is a failure of communication on my part. It is evidently not enough that the accession of NSC papers be posted. Attention must be called to them directly or they may well escape notice. It was my original expectation, not only to identify important NSC papers orally at Board meetings, but also to report briefly on developments at NSC Staff meetings. I have found it virtually impossible to break into the Board's discussions with such extraneous matters. If I may say so, my colleagues often seem more eager to speak than disposed to listen. If reports on NSC developments are really desired, I would suggest that time be fairly definitely allotted for them, as in the case of [REDACTED] reports regarding the Watch Committee.

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3. Implicit in the Board's reaction is the supposition that, had the Board been aware of the policy developments impending, it could have produced an intelligence estimate which would have materially affected the outcome. That supposition is not tenable. The NSC Staff and the Council itself were fully aware of the considerations which the Board wishes it had expressed. They were the basis of State's prolonged resistance to the demands of the

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Pentagon and could not have been more earnestly and authoritatively presented. In the end State was overborne by the sheer insistence of the Chiefs of Staff in disregard of such political considerations on grounds of an overriding military necessity. An NIE setting forth the same considerations that were advanced by State would not have altered either the JCS attitude or the result. Moreover, the matter having become one of determined Departmental policy, it may be doubted whether an objective and coherent intelligence estimate could have been got through our procedures of coordination.

4. It is the Director's policy that there should be an NIE corresponding to every major NSC policy paper. In the case of Spain, the present US policy was determined early in the existence of ONE, at a time when we were hard pressed to keep up with successive "crashes." It was agreed at that time that the considerations relating to Spain were already well understood and that no NIE need be undertaken. The policy relating to Greece was merely a corollary of that regarding Turkey. With respect to Turkey, NIE-9, undertaken when the NSC project was initiated, was actually published (26 February 1951) two months before the first draft of NSC 109 was submitted to the NSC Staff. NIE-9 was and still is quite adequate insofar as concerns the Turkish attitude. It does not deal at all with the reaction to be expected to the policy eventually adopted in NSC 109. It could not have done so on the basis of the terms of reference available to us in February.

5. In that respect our situation has deteriorated markedly as a result of the evolution of NSC procedures. Time was when NSC drafts were actually developed within the NSC Staff. By participation in preliminary discussions one could identify the critical questions likely to arise and could develop terms of reference for intelligence estimates which dealt not only with pertinent factors in the specific situation but also with probable reactions to hypothetical US courses of action with respect to it. Now NSC drafts are developed entirely within the Departments. Normally they are drafted in State and coordinated with the Pentagon before they are ever seen and considered by the NSC Staff. The function of the Staff is therefore reduced to "perfecting" texts already substantially agreed between its principal members. Inasmuch as the policy line to be recommended is their secret until this late stage is reached, participation in the NSC Staff no longer affords a basis for the early initiation of intelligence estimates closely related to the policy alternatives. The initiation of such estimates after the first blue draft appears would

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be too late in two respects: (1) the estimate could not be completed in time to be of use; (2) it would also, in effect, result in our taking a partisan position in an interdepartmental policy argument, which Mr. Jackson is most anxious to avoid. In the circumstances, we can hardly expect to do better than we did in the case of NIE-9/NSC 109.

6. National policies actually developed within the Departments as such are essentially Departmental policies based on Departmental rather than national intelligence. The current NSC practice therefore tends to undermine the basic concept of national intelligence as a basis for national policy. Nevertheless, this practice has developed as a practical expedient and the trend probably cannot be reversed. The adverse effects would be mitigated to some extent if national intelligence estimates directly related to the critical issues could be made available to Departmental drafters before Departmental policy positions had become firmly established. To accomplish that our NSC contact would have to be supplemented by Departmental contacts through which we could obtain the guidance necessary for framing more specific terms of reference. These contacts should be directly with the Departmental drafters, by arrangement with Departmental representatives on the NSC Staff. Indirect contact through the Departmental intelligence agencies would necessarily be inadequate and unsatisfactory.

7. Even if we were able, through such Departmental contacts, to develop the best possible terms of reference, we would still, on the basis of current experience, find it very difficult, if not impossible, to produce the required estimates in time for them to be of use to Departmental drafters; i.e., before Departmental policy positions had solidified. Despite all its shortcomings, ORE was able to produce coordinated national estimates to meet NSC requirements far more quickly than ONE seems able to do.

8. These matters involve problems in NSC and IAC relations which we should discuss jointly with Mr. Jackson before proceeding further.

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